

Message Text

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UNCLAS BANGKOK 9837

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E.O. 11652: N/A

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SUBJ: CABINET FORMATION--AS OF APRIL 15 NEW SENATE APPOINTMENTS

SUMMARY: NEW PRIME MINISTER WILL PROBABLY NOT BE FORMALLY NAMED UNTIL APRIL 22 WITH PARLIAMENT VOTE OF CONFIDENCE ON APRIL 29. GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES NINE NEW SENATORS, ALL MEMBERS OF SOCIAL ACTION OR THAI NATION PARTY. PRIME MINISTER KHUKRIT PRAMOT INSISTS DEMOCRATS MUST FORM NEW GOVERNMENT TO ASSURE STABILITY. END SUMMARY.

1. ACCORDING TO INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM SECRETARIAT OFFICIALS AT THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, THE NEW PRIME MINISTER WILL PROBABLY NOT BE NAMED UNTIL 22 AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES WILL NOT HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO VOTE ON THE POLICY OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT UNTIL APRIL 29. THIS IS DUE IN LARGE PART TO THE COMPLICATED PROCEDURES FOR SELECTING A PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET AND THE FACT THAT THE HOUSE NORMALLY MEETS IN GENERAL SESSION ON THURSDAYS AND FRIDAYS ONLY. THE SCHEDULE WILL PROBABLY BE AS FOLLOWS:

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APRIL 16 - KING OPENS FIRST SESSION OF NEW PARLIAMENT.

PARLIAMENT ADJOURNS IMMEDIATELY AFTER OPENING CEREMONIES.
APRIL 19 - HOUSE ELECTS PERMANENT HOUSE SPEAKER AND DEPUTY
SPEAKER. HOUSE ADJOURNS AFTER ELECTION. NAMES SENT TO KING
FOR APPROVAL.

APRIL 22 - PRIME MINISTER-ELECT CHOSEN BY HOUSE SPEAKER OR BY
VOTE OF HOUSE. NAME SENT TO KING FOR APPROVAL.

APRIL 22-29 - AFTER APPROVAL, PM SWEARS ALLEGIANCE BEFORE
KING. PM SELECTS A CABINET. THE NAMES OF MINISTERS ARE SENT
TO THE KING FOR HIS APPROVAL. THEY THEN TAKE THEIR OATH OF
OFFICE BEFORE THE KING.

APRIL 29 - PRIME MINISTER PRESENTS POLICY OF HIS GOVERN-
MENT FOR VOTE OF CONFIDENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

2. THE RTG ANNOUNCED ON APRIL 14 THAT THE KING, UPON
THE ADVICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER, HAD APPOINTED NINE NEW
SENATORS, WHOSE TERMS BEGAN AS OF APRIL 9. THE NINE ARE MRS.
RAEM PROMMOBON BUNYAPRASOP; POL LT CHAN MANUTHAM; COL. PRAKOP
PRAYUNPHOKKARAT, DEPUTY INTERIOR MINISTER; AIR CHIEF MARSHAL
BUA SIRISAP; SAWAT KHOTOHASANI; PHONG SARASIN, SAP TREASURER;
KASEM SIRISAMPHAN, CLOSE CONFIDANTE OF PM KHUKRIT; PRAYUN CHIN-
DASIN, DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL, SAP; AND SUTHEP ATTAKON,
SECRETARY TO INTERIOR MINISTER KHUKRIT PRAMOT.

3. NEW SENATORS ARE ALL EX-MPS OR PARTY OFFICIALS OF THE
THAI NATION OR SOCIAL ACTION PARTIES. THE APPOINTMENTS, WHICH
BRING THE SENATE UP TO STRENGTH, OBVIOUSLY WERE REWARDS FOR
SERVICES RENDERED TO THE PARTIES.

4. IN A PRESS CONFERENCE ON APRIL 12 AFTER PROBABLY THE
LAST MEETING OF THE PRESENT CABINET, PRIME MINISTER
KHUKRIT PRAMOT REITERATED HIS STATEMENT THAT IF CARE WAS
NOT EXERCISED IN FORMING THE NEW GOVERNMENT, IT MIGHT
NOT LAST SIX MONTHS BECAUSE HE KNEW THE PERSONS CONCERNED IN
FORMING THE COALITION. HE SAID THAT THE DEMOCRATS MUST
SUCCEED IN SETTING UP A GOVERNMENT. HE ADDED THAT A GOVERN-
MENT MADE UP OF PARTIES OTHER THAN THE DEMOCRATS WOULD
FACE GREATER DIFFICULTIES THAN HIS OWN COALITION, AND
THE DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT WOULD HAVE BEEN FOR NOUGHT.
HE ALSO SAID THAT IF THE DEMOCRAT PARTY IS NOT ABLE TO
SET UP A GOVERNMENT WITH ONE OR MORE OF THE OTHER PARTIES,
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THE SOCIAL ACTION PARTY WOULD COOPERATE WITH THE DEMOCRATS
TO SET UP A GOVERNMENT. IN ANSWER TO ANOTHER QUESTION
KHUKRIT AGAIN SAID THAT HE WAS READY TO RUN IN A BY-ELECTION
ANYTIME, ANYWHERE.
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